

Oklahoma Chess Monthly

OCTOBER 2021

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

OCM



Get Booked Up! (h/t Chris Walker)

In This Issue:

• RAPID TRENDS

• Good Things from the Pandemic

• Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

OKC RAPIDS CONTINUE NEWCOMER TRENDS

by Tom Braunlich

The recent trend toward high tournament participation with lots of brand new players continues. New players who started fooling around with online chess the past year during the pandemic have apparently become hungry to try their hand at “real” in-person over-the-board chess.

The OKC SEPTEMBER RAPIDS event, held September 25 at the St. John’s Episcopal Church in OKC, is a case in point. In the past such an event might perhaps get 40 players and



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4-5 newcomers. This one got 60 players and 14 new unrated beginners — and it would have probably been more except we became concerned the site was overflowed and we started limiting late entries.

Three active ‘chess moms’ were instrumental in bringing together this event, the first OKC tournament in over nine months — Josie Braddy, Rebecca Rutledge, and Lisa Chronister. Thanks to them for their very hard work, which included a last-minute room change. It wouldn’t have happened without them.

The games were all hard fought — including in the Booster section (proof of which is a great game annotated next page).

Expert Matt Dalthorp won the Open Section with a fine 4-0 score, which includes a Dragon win against Joe Veal in the last round (also annotated).

“Three active ‘chess moms’ were instrumental in bringing together this event, the first OKC tournament in over nine months — Josie Braddy, Rebecca Rutledge, and Lisa Chronister.”

Joe Ulahannon Jr. and Dr. Stefan Laos won the Reserve (U1600) section with 3½ and Preston Koloen was clear 3rd with 3.

Joseph Zacharias won the Booster 4-0 including a King’s Gambit barnburner last-round game vs. talented newcomer Jessica Kyle. (See below).

Crosstables are here:

<http://www.uschess.org/msa/XtblMain.php?202109255812-13564995>

TD was Tom Braunlich,

Chief Asst TD: Josie Braddy.

Games, next page.



Top: The Open section playing room.

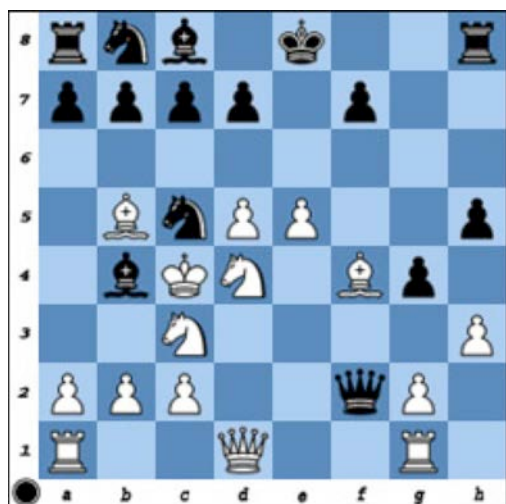
Middle: Joel Ulahannon Jr.

Bottom: Joe Veal (left) vs. Matt Dalthorp on round 4 board 1, a Dragon variation annotated next page

Kyle, Jessica
 Zacharias, Joseph [C25]
 OKC Rapids G/45+15 (4.19), 25.09.2021
[Notes by TB]

This was a remarkable game — the key game for the Booster Section — a King's Gambit with the White King wandering around the board like it's the 1800s! Both these new young players look talented to me, and this was a hard-fought battle.

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 g5 5.h3 Nf6 6.e5 Nh5 7.d4 Ng3 8.Rg1 Bb4 9.Bd2 h5!? 10.d5 Nb8 11.Bb5 [11.Ne2!] 11...g4 12.Nd4 Qh4 13.Bxf4 Ne4+ 14.Ke2 Qf2+ 15.Kd3 Nc5+ 16.Kc4



[So, which side do you prefer here, and why?]

16...a5

A natural move, but now White is better! According to the computer Black has one narrow path to a win here! -- 16...Bxc3 17.bxc3 Qxf4 18.Kxc5 c6! 19.Bd3 Na6+ 20.Bxa6 b6+! 21.Kb4 Bxa6 22.Ka3 c5 23.Ne2 Qe3 and black is winning!

17.a3?

[Winning is 17.Qf1 Qxf1+ 18.Rgxf1 c6 19.hxg4 hxg4 20.Nf5 cxb5+ 21.Nxb5 Nca6 22.a3 Be7 23.Nbd6+ Bxd6 24.Nxd6+ Kf8 25.Nxc8]

17...c6?

[17...Bxc3 18.bxc3 Qxf4 19.Kxc5 0-0 and black is probably winning.]

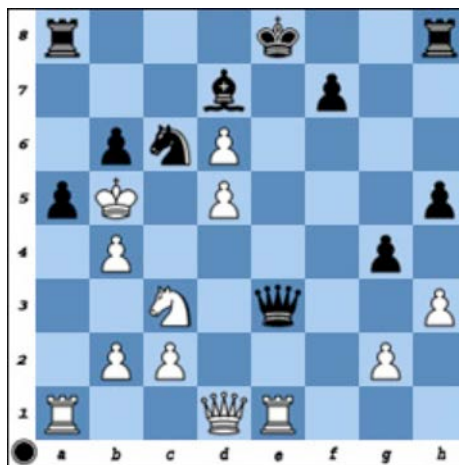
18.Be3

A clever try! But the straightforward 18.axb4 Qxf4 19.bxc5 cxb5+ 20.Ncxb5 is winning for white.]

18...Qxe3 19.axb4 cxb5+ 20.Kxc5 d6+!?

[Wow, these players are pulling out all the stops!]

21.exd6 b6+ 22.Kxb5 Bd7+ 23.Nc6? [Unfortunate mistake on the verge of winning. 23.Kc4 intending to hide on b3 wins for Jessica.] 23...Nxc6 24.Re1



24... Ne5 mate! [Awesome!]

Veal, Joe (1945)

Dalthorp, Matt (2012) [B78]

OKC Rapids G/45+15 (4), 25.09.2021

[Notes by TB]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.h4 Rc8 11.Bb3 h5 [The players are going into the main line of the famous Dragon variation. I'm old enough to remember when this move 11...h5 was an exciting new idea for Black! But nowadays we are still near the beginning of the theory, which the players continue to blitz out:]

12.0-0-0 Ne5 13.Bg5 Rc5 14.Kb1 b5 15.g4 [Still theory!] 15...hxg4 16.h5 Nxh5 17.Rxh5 [According to my database this exchange sac here has been played many times, but the modern main line appears to be to play 17.Nd5 first. Karpov was one of the players who paved the way here. Example

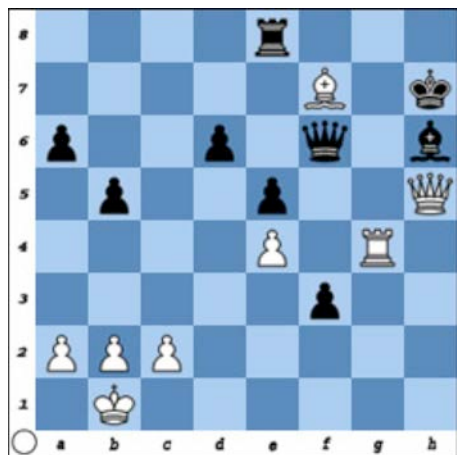
game of his: 17...Re8 18.Rxh5 gxh5 19.Qh2 Rc4 20.Bxc4 bxc4 21.Qxh5 f6 22.f4 Nf7 23.Bh4 Qb8 24.Rh1 c3 25.b3 Qb7 26.f5 Ne5 27.Ne6 1-0 (27) Karpov,A (2725)-Sznapi,A (2430) Dubai 1986]

17...gxh5 18.Nd5



18...Rxd5 [Now this counter-exchange sacrifice helps black defend.] 19.Bxd5 Nxf3 20.Nxf3 gxf3 21.Bh6 e5 22.Bg5 Bf6 23.Bh6 Re8 [Finally a new move! A previous master game went: 23...Bg7 24.Bg5 Bf6 ½ñ½ (24) Wan,Y (2456)-Emiroglu,C (2253) Albena 2012]

24.Rg1+ Bg4 25.Be3 [White tries to worm in somehow on the kingside, but black's three extra pawns seem to keep it all covered. Still, it's hard for black to consolidate and soon Joe gets some play.] 25...Qe7 26.Qh2 Bg7 27.Qd2 a6 28.Bg5 Bf6 29.Be3 Kh7? [Black should evacuate the king to the queenside. On Kh7 he is suddenly vulnerable! 29...Rc8 30.Qh2 Kf8] 30.Qh2 Bg5?? [30...Bh4 was the only good move.] 31.Rxg4 Bxe3 32.Qxh5+ Bh6 33.Bxf7 [White is winning; but he was in severe time trouble...] 33...Qf6



34.Rg6?

[It's unfortunate for White that such a natural looking move is bad. Instead, 34.Bg6+ Kg7 35.Bxe8+ Kf8 36.Bd7! wins.]

34...Qf4 35.Rg1 [35.Rxh6+ Qxh6 36.Bxe8 f2! 37.Qf7+ Kh8! 38.Qxf2 Qh1+ A beautiful saving line!] 35...f2 36.Qg6+ Kh8 37.Rf1 Rf8! 38.Bd5 Qe3 39.Qh5 Qe1+ 40.Qd1 Qxd1+ 0-1

Ferguson, Jake (1680)

Dalthorp,Matt (2012) [E48]

OKC Rapids G/45+15 (2), 25.09.2021

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 b6 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.f3 0-0 7.Nge2 d5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.0-0 Re8 10.Ng3 Bf8 11.Re1 c5 12.dxc5 d4 13.Na4 bxc5 14.Qc2 Nc6 15.a3 Ne5 16.Bb5 Qa5 17.Nc3 Re6 18.exd4 Nxf3+ 19.gxf3 Rxe1+ 20.Kf2 Rxc1 21.Qxc1 cxd4 22.b4 Qb6 0-1

Amburgy, Ryan (2240)

Braunlich, Tom (2200) [E92]

Tulsa Midtown Chess Club Quads (1), 11.09.2021

[Notes by TB]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0ñ0 6.Be2 e5 7.Be3 [I played my old King's Indian and Ryan responded with the tricky Gligoric Variation. Now if Black continues in normal ways with ...Nc6 he gets into trouble. So I had to try to remember my old repertoire lines here.] 7...exd4 8.Nxd4 Re8 9.f3 c6 10.Nc2 [Another tricky move, and one I remember having been worried about when I studied this line long ago. I think the main move was 10.Bf2 protecting the hanging bishop, which I think was played in two important Karpov-Kasparov world championship games.]

10...d5 11.cxd5 cxd5 12.exd5 Bf5 13.Bf2 Na6?! [Ryan was moving instantly here, whereas I now was at the end of my memory banks. I spent 14 of my 60 minutes here. The obvious move is to win the pawn back with 13...Bxc2 14.Qxc2 Nxd5 Ryan point out this is the main line, but that he likes White in this

position. I disliked this position where white has a slight edge with two bishops on an open board. I wanted something clearer, but what I came up with didn't work.]

14.Ne3! Nb4 15.Oñ0 Rxe3 16.Bxe3 Nc2 17.Qd2 Qe8 18.Bf2 Nxa1 19.Rxa1 [I'd hoped to have comp for the pawn here, but in fact I have nothing.]

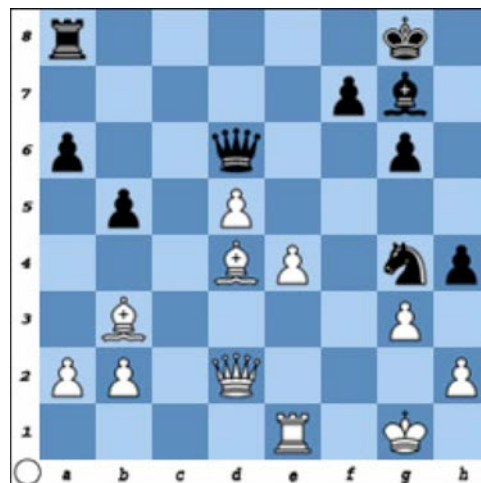
19...a6 20.Re1 Qd7 21.Bc4 h5 22.Bb3 b5 23.Ne4?! [A careless move by Ryan. He was moving fast as I was already down under 10 minutes; but this move let's black back into the game. 23.d6 should win easily.]

23...Bxe4 24.fxe4 Ng4 25.Bd4 Qd6 26.g3 h4

(See Diagram)

[Getting some counterplay.]

27.Bxg7 Kxg7 28.Qc3+ Ne5 29.Rc1 hxg3 30.Qxg3 Rh8 31.Kh1?!= [31.Kg2] 31...Qf6 [The computer now calls it equal, because



Position after 26...h4

white's B is blocked on b3. Therefore Ryan sacs a pawn for activity. But I have less than 2 minutes and soon self-destruct.] 32.d6!? Qf3+? 33.Qxf3 Nxf3 [The endgame is no relief as white keeps his d-pawn. Ryan easily won in a few moves of time scramble.]

1-0

The 53rd JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL

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Some Good Things from the Pandemic

Reviews by IM John Donaldson

Four new offerings from the Belgian based publisher Thinkers Publishing are evidence some good things have come out of the pandemic.

They are also a testament to the publisher's commitment to diversity, with books on the opening and improving, plus a collection of reminiscences.

The Comfort Zone: Keys to Your Chess Success (2021, 259 pages, paperback, figurine algebraic, \$38) by Daniel Gormally falls into the improvement category and is intended for a target audience of roughly 1800-2300, though I suspect even stronger players will find parts of this book of interest.

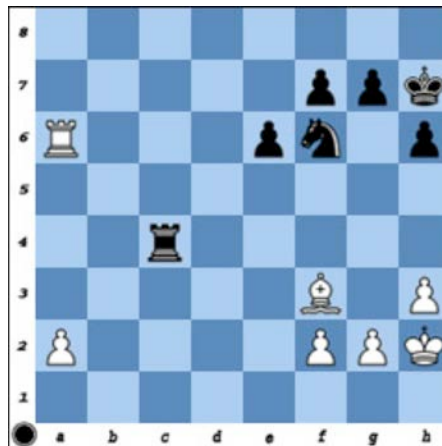
Written in Gormally's entertaining and self-deprecating style, *The Comfort Zone: Keys to Your Chess Success* offers a potpourri of suggestions on how to improve backed up with carefully chosen examples. Here are two that may cause you to think about chess differently.

The first example illustrates how first impressions can sometimes be mistaken.

Colmenares - Arkell [B17]

Samnaun 2008

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Ng5 Ngf6 6.Bd3 Nb6 7.N1f3 Bg4 8.h3 Bxf3 9.Nxf3 e6 10.0-0 Be7 11.Qe2 0-0 12.c4 Qc7 13.b3 c5 14.Bb2 cxd4 15.Bxd4 Nbd7 16.Rad1 Rfe8 17.Bb2 a6 18.Ng5 h6 19.Ne4 Red8 20.Rd2 Nxe4 21.Bxe4 Bf6 22.Bxf6 Nxf6 23.Rfd1 Rxd2 24.Rxd2 Rb8 25.Bf3 b5 26.Qd3 bxc4 27.Qxc4 Qxc4 28.bxc4 Rb1+ 29.Kh2 Rc1 30.Rd8+ Kh7 31.Ra8 Rxc4 32.Rxa6



32...Rc2

It was around about this time that Simon and myself went to view the game. Simon thought that White was better, because of the a-pawn. When we told Keith about this conversation later, he was adamant that Black was better, because in his view the White a-pawn can be easily restrained and the black kingside has unlimited potential.

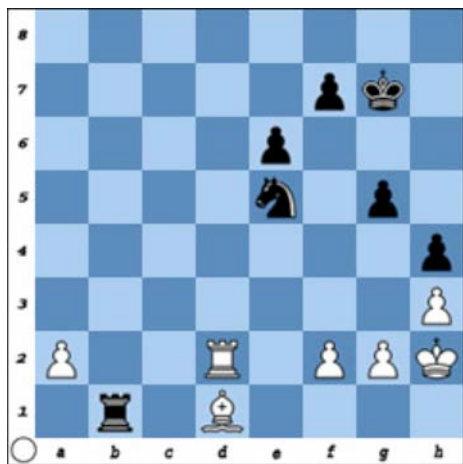
So, if Black does have a winning strategy, it's as follows; when White goes a4, put the rook on a8 and the pawn on a7, but he can't make any progress after that. If he moves the rook, he loses the a-pawn.

So, with White's trump card stymied, Black's plan is to gradually advance on the kingside, suffocating White. Keith manages to carry out this strategic plan to perfection.

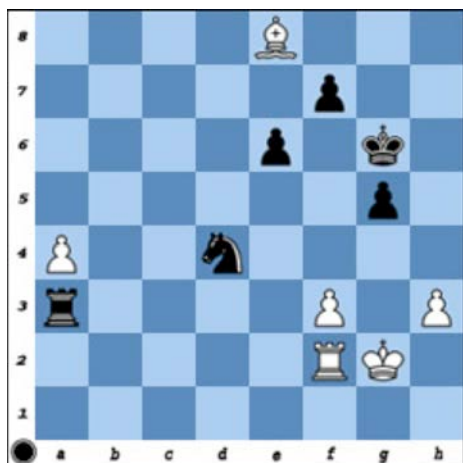
33.Kg1 Rc1+ 34.Kh2 g5!

This is Keith's favorite chess move.

35.Rc6 Ra1 36.Rc2 Nd7 37.Bc6 Ne5 38.Ba4 Kg7 39.Bb3 h5 40.Rd2 Rb1 41.Bd1 h4



42.g3? hxg3+ 43.Kxg3 Rc1 44.Be2 Rc3+ 45.f3 Kf6 46.a4 Ra3 47.Rd4 Ra2 48.Bf1 Ng6 49.Rb4 Kg7 50.Re4 Kh6 51.Bb5 Nh4 52.Re2 Ra3 53.Rf2 Kg6 54.Bc6 Nf5+ 55.Kg2 Nd4 56.Be8



56...e5?

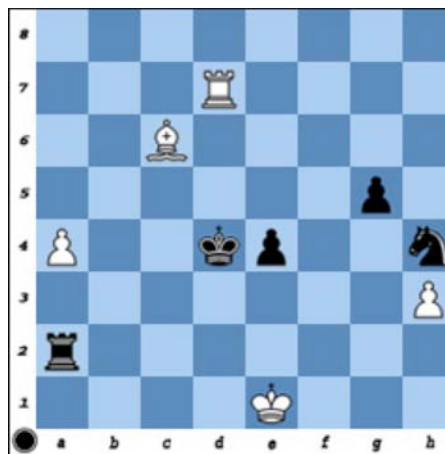
Keith, after playing a magnificent endgame, errs badly. Perhaps therefore he has not reached 2600 or above, because of occasional lapses in concentration. We all have our reasons why we don't reach a level we aspire to, and in Keith's case it's certainly not to do with understanding. (Instead: 56...Kf6 57.Rd2 (57.Bd7 Ke7 58.Bb5 f5 and it feels good to roll those pawns), 57...Nxf3 winning.)

57.Rb2!

(Targeting the pinned f7-pawn). Now the game should end in a draw.

57...Nxf3 58.Rb7 Nh4+ 59.Kf2 Ra2+ 60.Ke1 Kf5 61.Rxf7+ Ke4 62.Bc6+ Kd4 63.Rg7 e4 64.Rd7+?

(64.Kd1 Nf3 65.Kc1 and White has enough counterplay to hold.)



64...Ke3 65.Kd1 Nf3 66.Re7 Ra1+ 67.Kc2 Nd4+ 68.Kb2 Nxc6 0-1

This second example illustrates how far opening theory has advanced due to ever more powerful engines.

Gormally - Haussernot [B51]

Hastings 2015

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Nd7 4.d4 Ngf6 5.e5 Qa5+? 6.Nc3 Ne4



7.Rb1!!

(Protecting the Bishop with the Rook!—TB)

7...e6

7...Nxc3 8.bxc3 or

7...cxd4 8.Qxd4 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Qxa2 10.Rb4!

8.d5! a6 9.Bxd7+ Bxd7 10.O-O Nxc3 11.bxc3 Qc7 12.Ng5!

(see diagram next page)



For OCTOBER 2021

Active Oklahoma Players

	Player	This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	0	
2	Howard Zhong	2302	0	
3	Ryan Amburgy	2240	0	
4	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	
5	Mark Hulsey	2153	0	
6	David Zelnick	2137	0	
7	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	
8	Veronika Zilajeva	2080	0	
9	Charles D Unruh	2079	6	
10	Tom Patton	2076	0	
11	James Long	2064	0	
12	Michael Nugent	2042	0	
13	Matt Dalthorp	2032	20	▲
14	Charles M Unruh	2024	0	
15	David Luscomb	2022	0	▼
16	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	
17	Stephen Gehly	2000	0	
18	Logan Zachare	1959	0	
19	Wayne Hatcher	1926	0	
20	Jerry Casteel	1926	0	
21	Joe Dean Veal	1917	-8	
22	Maxwell Barnes	1901	-21	
23	Harold Brown Jr.	1901	0	
24	Oscar Wang	1870	0	
25	Chris Dooley	1868	0	



Player of the Month

RYAN AMBURGY

You snag your first GM, you get POTM. Ryan is on quite a roll the past year.



12...exd5?

12...dxe5 13.dxe6 Bxe6 14.Nxe6 fxe6 15.Qg4 0-0-0 16.Qxe6+ Qd7 17.Qxe5 Bd6 18.Qe2.

13.Re1 Be6 14.exd6 Qxd6 15.Rxb7 Be7 16.Nxe6 fxe6 17.Qg4! Kf7 18.Bf4 e5 19.Rxe5 g6 20.Rxe7+ Qxe7 21.Rxe7+ Kxe7 22.Qg5+ 1-0

Gormally writes he had mixed feelings after this game. That winning without essentially making a move of his own didn't provide satisfaction. Personal observations like these are found throughout *The Comfort Zone: Keys to Your Chess Success* and make this book a fascinating read for those wanting an insider's look at top level chess.

For a preview of this book go to <https://thinkerspublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/The-Comfort-Zone-teaser.pdf>

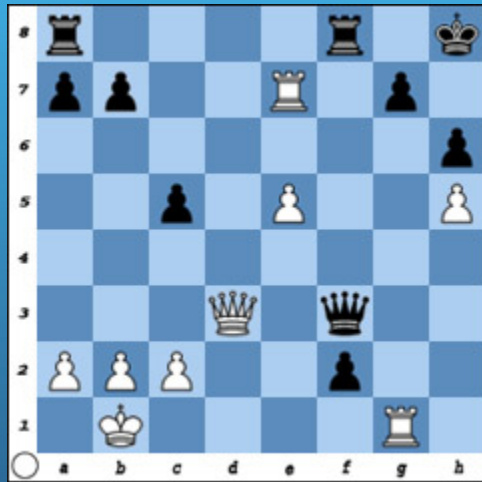
The Modernized Alekhine Defense

The Sicilian has long been Black's favorite answer to 1.e4 but its popularity has started to wane. This is partly due to the large body of theory associated with it and also the presence of sharp lines leading to forced draws making it an impractical choice for stronger players competing against lower-rated counterparts. Two recent offers from Thinkers Publishing take a look at other ways to answer 1.e4 that don't suffer from these problems.

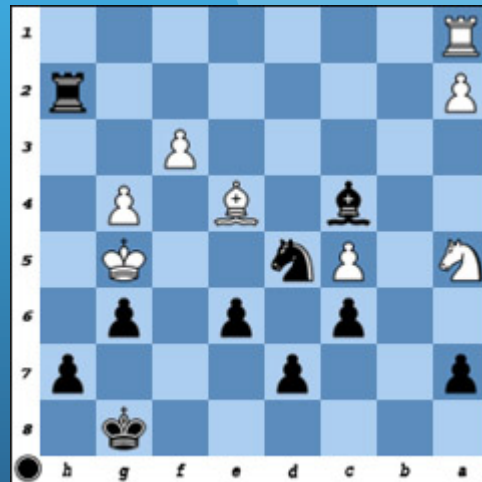
Perennial 2600+ rated Grandmaster Christian Bauer is the author of a number of highly praised opening books and *The Modernized Alekhine Defense* (2021, 543 pages,

PUZZLES

Answers Next
Page



White to move and win. (Easy)



Black to move and win. (Difficult)

paperback, figurine algebraic, \$42) will only further enhance his reputation. This weighty tome is now the guide to all things Alekhine Defense related as he goes well beyond providing a narrow opening repertoire, offering multiple choices against some of White's more popular choices.

One example where he provides pioneering analysis is in his advocacy for 5...g6 in the Four Pawns Attack after 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.Nc3. His 2021 draw as Black against Veselin Topalov in this line is evidence that he practices what he preaches. *If you play the Alekhine you must have this book.*

The Alekhine may never have enjoyed the popularity of the Sicilian but even Bobby Fischer played it from time to time including twice in the 1972 World Championship match. The subject of the next book has no such stalwart backing, but is becoming increasingly popular for the aforementioned reasons: the amount of theory needed to play it is quite manageable and White has no way to force a draw.

The Modernized Philidor Defense

Those who favor positional play and who have good endgame skills will want to take a look at *The Modernized Philidor Defense* (2021, 410 pages, paperback, figurine algebraic, \$40) by Spanish FIDE Master Sergio Trigo Urquijo.

The move order route to the main positions of the Philidor is via 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 as the older 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6 is strongly met by 4.dxe5 Nxe4 5.Qd5 Nc5 6.Bg5 and Black has no way to equalize. The modern move-order does allow White to force a queen-less middle game where Black has lost the right to castle via 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8. After the further 6.Bc4 Be6 7.Bxe6 fxe6 White has also inflicted doubled isolated e-pawns on the second player, and yet practice has shown these positions to be quite playable for Black. His king is closer to the center for the endgame and his e-pawns control many squares.

The author of *The Modernized Philidor Defense* is not well-known but has done an

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) McShane-Gustaffson, 2003. White's in trouble except for one thing ... he has mate by force with 1. Qh7+ Kxh7 2. R1xg7+ Kh8 3. Rh7+ Kg8 4. Reg7mate.

(2) Svidler-Anand, 2013. White's King is a tad overexposed! Let's weave a mating net:
1. ... Kg7 (threatening mate with ...h6) 2. Bxd5 (freeing up the f4 square for white's king) 2... e5! (not bothering to recapture, we want to keep that f4 square under black's control. The net is inescapable now. The h-pawn will checkmate white next move.

Chess Coaching Available from USCF Life Master Tom Braunlich



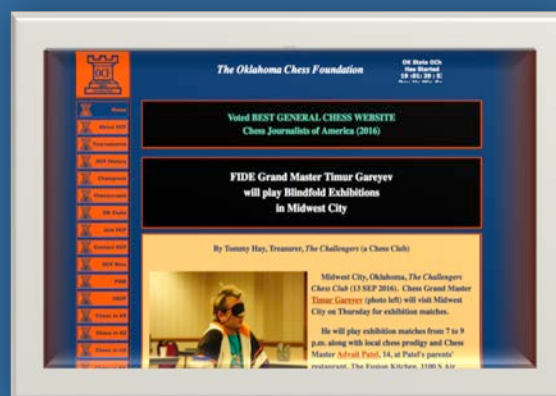
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excellent job of covering not only the main lines of the Philidor but the sidelines leading up to it.

Your reviewer was curious about the sometimes-made claim that White has no forced draw in the Philidor. This is pretty much true, but to the author's credit he does point out the following exception:

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Nf3 Nbd7 5.Bc4 Be7 6.dxe5 dxe5



7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Ng5+ Kg8 9.Ne6 Qe8 10.Nxc7 Qg6 11.Nxa8 Qxg2 12.Rf1 Nc5 13.Be3 Bh3 14.Qe2 Qxf1+ 15.Qxf1 Bxf1 16.Kxf1 Kf7 17.Nc7 Rc8 18.N7d5 Ncxe4 19.Nxe7 Kxe7 20.Nxe4 Nxe4



Draw — as played in Z. Ma – Motylev, China 2013, and a half dozen other games. After 21.Ba7 or 21.Re1 White can pretty much complete the job of emptying the board. Of course, such possibilities are found in pretty much all openings and have no effect on the theoretical well being of the Philidor.

Genna Remembers

The final offering from Thinkers Publishing, *Genna Remembers* (2021, 257 pages, paperback, \$43) is the latest effort by the Dutch Grandmaster to preserve the memory of the many different individuals who were part of the Soviet chess dynasty, the greatest the game has ever seen.

In previous books Sosonko has primarily focused on the Soviet World Champions (Botvinnik, Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky, Karpov and Kasparov). Some of them, principally Kasparov, get a mention here, but the emphasis is on others including Grandmasters Leonid Shamkovich (aka “The Prince”) and Igor Ivanov and the ill-fated International Master Sergey Nikolaev who was tragically murdered by a bunch of teenage neo-Nazis in Moscow.

Genna Remembers will not improve your chess but it will improve your chess culture. Any chess player with an interest in the history of the game will find this book fascinating reading.

IN THE BLEACHERS By Steve Moore



**“You call this a sport? It’s just plain cruelty!
Our guy doesn’t stand a chance!”**



ILONZE WINS ALABAMA CHAMPIONSHIP

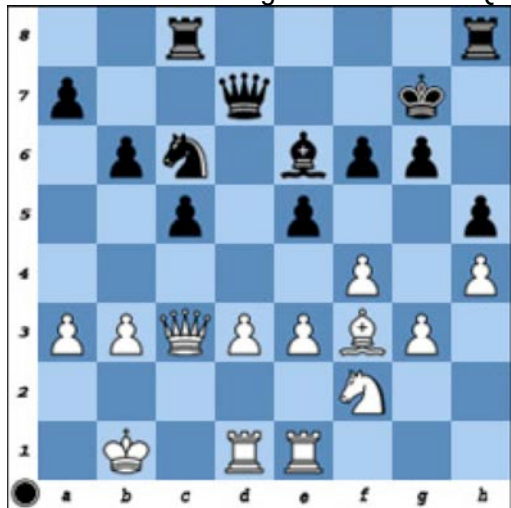
Former Okie Chibuzo Ilonze took his radical Okie chess skills with him to Alabama and won the state championship there last month with a 5-0 score, including wins over two NMs.

Barnakov, Yury (2283)

Ilonze, Chibuzo (2103) [A30]

Alabama St Championship (5.1), 19.08.2021

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.b3 g6 3.Bb2 Bg7 4.c4 c5 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.e3 0-0 7.a3 d5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Qc2 Nc7 10.Na4 Bxb2 11.Qxb2 b6 12.Be2 Bb7 13.h4 h5 14.Rg1 Bc8 15.Ng5 Qd6 16.f4 e5 17.g3 Bf5 18.Nc3 f6 19.Nge4 Qd7 20.0-0-0 Kg7 21.Nf2 Rh8 22.Bf3 Rac8 23.d3 Be6 24.Kb1 Nd5 25.Rge1 Nxc3+ 26.Qxc3



26...Nd4! 27.exd4 cxd4 28.Qb2 Rc3 29.fxe5 f5 30.b4 Rb3 31.Rc1 Rxb2+ 32.Kxb2 Rc8 33.Rxc8 Qxc8 34.Rc1 Qb8 35.Nh3 Qxe5 36.Nf4 Bf7 37.Rf1 a5 38.Bc6 Qe3 39.bxa5 Qd2+ 40.Kb1 Bb3 0-1 h/t Shaun Graham.

Amburgy Defeats GM

For any young NM the first GM scalp is an important milestone. Ryan Amburgy defeated a GM at this month's Southwest Open in Dallas, and did it in crushing style. See "Game of the Month" below.

Diving Chess?

Of all the whacky variations on chess competitions I've seen over the years, this has to be one of the most intriguing.

"Diving Chess" has actually been around a few years, and was included in a recent "World Mind Games Championship" (in which worldwide competitions in many board games are played).

But this one has wet twist to it — players play underwater on the bottom of a swimming pool. The key is INSTEAD OF A CLOCK THE TIME THE PLAYERS HAVE EACH MOVE DEPENDS ON HOW LONG THEY CAN HOLD THEIR BREATH!

Thus, if you have good lung power you get more thinking time.



Maybe we should have a Diving Chess event in Oklahoma!?

There's an organization for it. See their website:

<https://divingchess.com/hello-world/>



Amburgy, Ryan (2205)
 Preotu, Razvan (2557) [A35]
 2021 Southwest Open Irving TX, United States
 (5.3), 05.09.2021
[Notes by Braunlich]

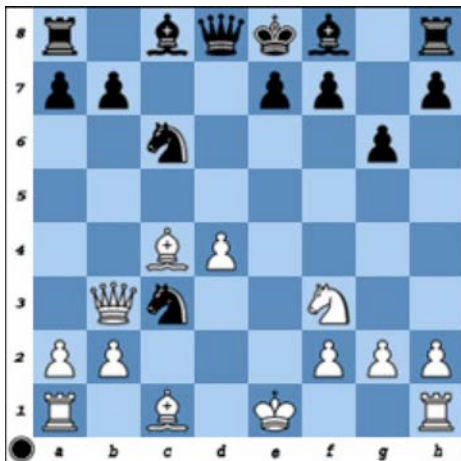
Oklahoma's news master continues to improve rapidly. Here at the Southwest Open he defeats a European GM (I believe his first such win), and does it in positional style...

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nc3 g6 4.e3 Nf6 5.d4 cxd4 6.exd4 d5

The game has transposed into an old variation that normally arises from the Caro-Kann, called the Schlechter.

7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Qb3 Nxc3 9.Bc4

[9.bxc3 Bg7 10.Be2 0-0 11.0-0 is considered fine for black. But this Bc4 in-between move puts some pressure on Black.]



9...Nd5!?

In most Caro-Kann books I've seen this clever retort is supposed to equalize for black. It attempts to leave white with an isolated queen's pawn. Either way black will have to

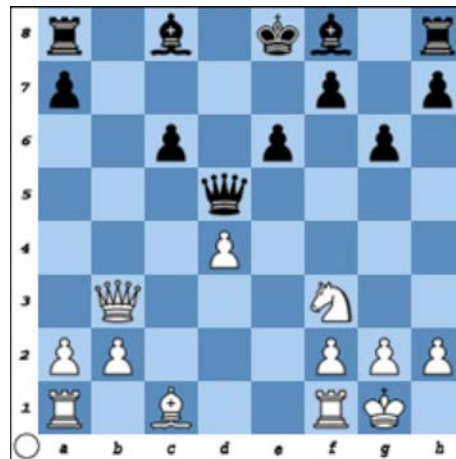
play ...e6 (not desirable positionally). 9...e6 has been played instead by Wesley So and others. 10.bxc3 and here White is supposed to get an edge with a well-timed Ba3, preventing black from castling. But Aronian-So went: 10...Bd7 11.Be2 Na5 12.Qc2 Bg7 13.Ba3 Bf8 14.Bb2 Bg7 15.Ba3 Bf8 16.Bb2 Bg7 17.Ba3 ½ñ½ (17) Aronian,L (2794)-So,W (2799) Berlin 2018]

10.Bxd5 e6 11.Bxc6+

This move unbalances the position. White gives up the 2Bs in return for the better pawn structure and some development lead. If instead 11.Bc4 Bg7 Black gets the pressure on the IQP that he was hoping for, and if 12.d5 exd5 13.Bxd5 Qe7+ 14.Be3 Qb4+ Black is actually better.

11...bxc6 12.0-0 Qd5

This is the 'tabiya' position for this variation, which has been played many times in GM games, with no conclusion about who is better. Black is fine with a queen exchange, reaching a dynamic endgame, so white usually does something else. The most popular moves here are Be3 or Bg5. Ryan spent over 2 minutes on his reply here, so I wonder if he was out of preparation, or was just trying to remember his plans for this line.



13.Qe3!? Bb7?!

His opponent replies very quickly. Is he angling for a quick ...c5 move? But the B has now lost control of e6, a sensitive square.

Instead a 2018 GM game went: 13...Bg7

14.Bd2 Oñ0 15.Rfc1 Rd8 16.Rc5 Qd6 17.Ba5 Rd7 18.Bc3 Bb7 19.Ne5 Bxe5 20.Rxe5 Qe7 21.Re1 Rd5 22.Rxd5 cxd5 23.Qd2 Ba6 24.Bb4 Qd7 25.Qf4 Rc8 26.Bc5 Bb5 27.h4 h5 28.Re3 Qc7 29.Bd6 Qc2 30.Qh6 f6 31.Rc3 Qb1+ 32.Kh2 Bc4 33.b3 Rd8 34.Be7 1ñ0 (34) Wang,H (2710)-Zuo,Y (2367) Hangzhou 2018;

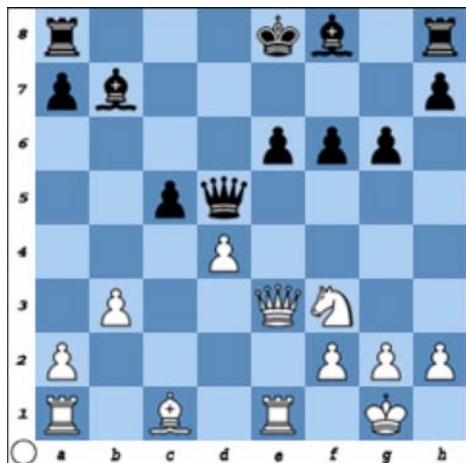
I would suggest instead 13...f6 which is considered a good reply against other variations. Black wants to develop his KB to e7 to keep control of that diagonal, and put Kf7, while also keeping white's dangerous N out of e5.

14.b3 f6

Now the GM spends some time and comes up with this move anyway, but why was a tempo spent on Bb7?

[14...c5 15.Bb2 is only good for White.]

15.Re1 c5?!



It seems the GM is trying to come up with a creative combination of two development schemes over-the-board, but after Ryan's simple reply it looks to be in White's favor. It can't be right to place your king in the center and then open lines there.

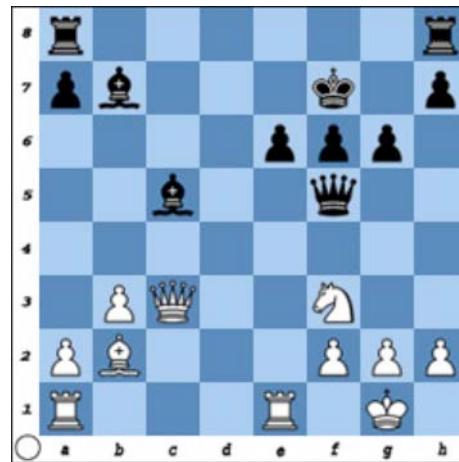
16.Bb2 Kf7 17.dxc5

[17.Rad1 also looks winning.]

17...Bxc5 18.Qc3 Qf5

The computer says black's last chance to stay in the game is 18...Be7 19.Rad1 Qf5 20.Rd7 Bxf3 21.gxf3 Rhe8 22.Ba3 but that hardly looks

promising either.



19.Ne5+!

A simple but devastating breakthrough move, which points out the tentative coordination of black's pieces.

19...fxe5 20.Qxc5 Rhc8 21.Qb4 Bd5 22.Rxe5 Qf6 23.Qd2

By protecting the B Ryan threatens a rook discovery, while also bringing the Q to the kingside for attack on the long diagonal. Black's nice B on d5 can do little to help. 23.Re2 Qg5 24.f4! also looks winning.

23...Qe7 24.Rae1 Rd8 25.Qd4 Rac8 26.h4

Protecting against back rank mates while threatening to lever open Black's king.

26...Ke8 27.Ba3! Qxa3 28.Rxd5 Rxd5 29.Qxd5 Rc1 30.Qxe6+ Kf8

Ryan has won a second pawn and now will have to show some technique to win a Queen ending. This isn't easy against a GM! First step: centralized the Q (with tempo) before the trade of rooks. Then make a passed pawn while keeping the white King safe from perpetual checks.

31.Qe8+ Kg7 32.Qe5+ Kg8 33.Rxc1 Qxc1+ 34.Kh2 Qa3 35.Qe2 a5 36.g3

Kg7 37.Kg2 h5

[Black would like to play 37...a4 but can't do so without losing the pawn with checks on his wide-open king; so he tries to making a hiding place for it.

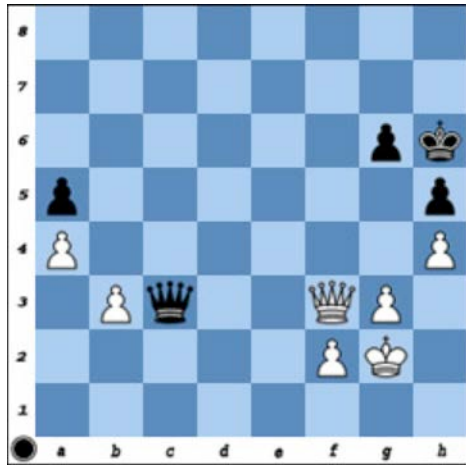
38.Qd2 Kf7 39.Qd7+ Kf6 40.Qa4

The fact that Ryan is winning all the K+P endings makes it easier for him to push the black Queen around.

40...Qc5 41.Qf4+ Kg7 42.a4 Qd5+ 43.Qf3 Qd4 44.Qb7+ Kh6 45.Qa8

It's nice how Ryan combines threats to make progress. Here the a-pawn is attacked while white also hopes to play Qh8 mate if black's Q leaves the long diagonals.

45...Qc3 46.Qf3!



46...Qb4

Look at all the ways white can force the queen trade if black tries to keep defending his a-pawn:

- 46...Qd2 47.Qf4+;
- 46...Qe1 47.Qe3+;
- 46...Qc7 47.Qf4+;
- 46...Qc5 47.Qe3+;
- If Black instead retreats the Q elsewhere, white apparently can win the pawn with checks. For example, 46...Qc8 47.Qe3+ Kh7 48.Qa7+ Kh6 49.Qxa5, etc.

47.Qf4+ Qxf4 48.gxf4 Kg7

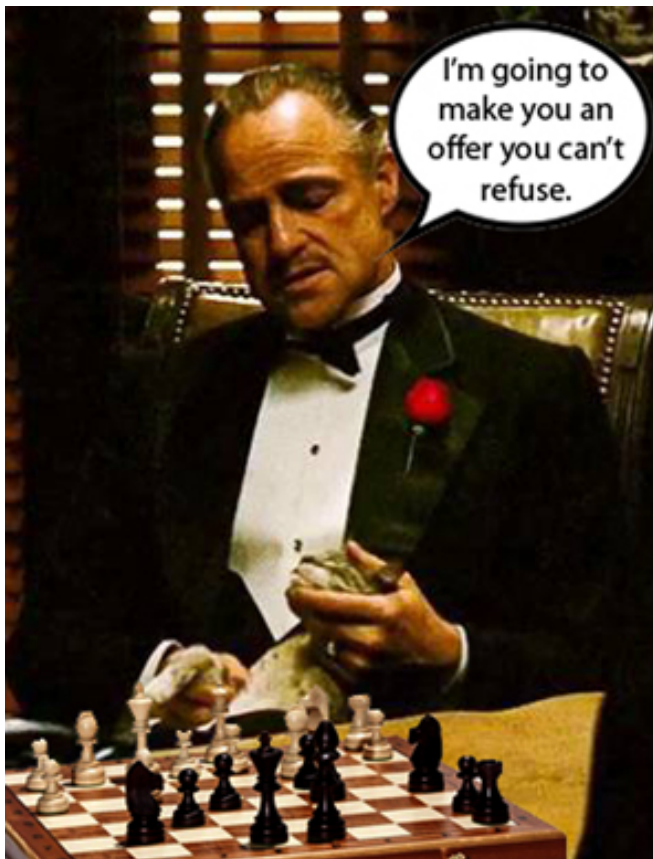
This K+P ending should be an easy win.

49.Kf3 Kf6 50.Ke4 Ke6 51.f3 Kf6 52.f5

[52.b4!]

52...gxf5+ 53.Kd5 0-1

Another impressive game by R. Amburgy!



UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS



For More Tournament Info Visit the
USCF Tournament Site:
www.uschess.org/tlas/upcoming.php

Oct 9 -10

53rd JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL

Tulsa OK

5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Tulsa Holiday Inn CITY CENTER, 17 W. Seventh Street, Tulsa OK 74119. 918-585-5898. HR: \$95. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). EF: \$45 if mailed by 10/4, \$55 thereafter, with these discounts: \$10 off for Seniors over age 60, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). Registration: 9-9:45am Sat 10/9. Prizes \$\$2000 (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: \$500(G)-200, X: 200, A: 175. Reserve (U1800): \$250(G) C: 175 D: 175, Novice (U1200): \$200(G), 1000/below: \$125. Rounds: 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Byes: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. Adv. Entries: www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. Info: tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W.
*CHECK prior to the tournaments for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.

Nov 13-14

5th FRANK K BERRY MEMORIAL

Stroud OK

5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Cattle Country Lodge, 1200 N 8th Ave, Stroud, OK 74079. (Turner Turnpike, Exit 179, then north 200 yards to other side of turnpike.) HR: \$95. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). EF: \$45 if mailed by 11/9, \$55 thereafter, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). Registration: 9-9:45am Sat 11/13. Prizes \$\$2200 (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: \$550(G)-250, X: 200, A: 200. Reserve (U1800): \$250(G) C: 200 D: 200, Novice (U1200): \$200(G), 1000/below: \$150. Rounds: 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Byes: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. Adv. Entries: www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. Info: tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W.
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Dec 18

Annual Holiday Open

Tulsa OK

4-SS, G/45;+15. Site: Harvard Ave Baptist Church, 17th and Harvard, Tulsa.

